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If the Soviet reaction left any room for doubt, this was entirely removed on the occasion of the drama which was played out in Belgrade in the last week of March, 1941. On the 25th of that month, the Yugoslav Premier, Tsvetkovich, and his Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tsintsar Markovich, were received by Hitler and signed Yugoslavia's adhesion to the Tripartite Pact in Vienna. Forty-eight hours later a *coup d'état* put General Simovich in power. Rising magnificently, the Serbian people, more clear-sighted than their leaders, and faithful to their tradition of independence, had swept away the pusillanimous ministers who had just put the country at the feet of the oppressor. War was inevitable. At Vichy, when Pourich, the Yugoslav minister, announced his King's decision to Admiral Darlan, the latter said to him quizzingly: 'How many divisions have you, for resisting Germany?' And Pourich replied: 'Sir, that is a question we never ask in my country. We fight first, and count afterwards'.

There you have the whole heroic philosophy of the Serbian people. Russia greeted Belgrade's *coup d'état* by signing, on April 5, a pact of friendship and non-aggression with the new Government. She could not do more to indicate where her sympathies lay. *Pravda* recalled the fact that the relations between the two countries had steadily improved since May, 1940, when diplomatic contact had been resumed. But Belgrade learned the news of this pact simultaneously with that of the German attack, which took place a few hours later. To justify this aggression, Hitler enumerated a certain number of complaints, the first of which was a reminder of the Sarajevo outrage. That day, he had no doubt forgotten one of the sentences in *Mein Kampf*: 'It was the hand of the goddess of eternal law and of inexorable punishment that struck down Austrian Germany's most deadly enemy, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand'.²

Bulgaria took advantage of the German victory to reoccupy Macedonia, and on May 18th the Bulgarian flag was hoisted at Skoplje. She announced that she would limit her occupation to the lands she considered as *irredenta*. Needless to say, the appeal which the Yugoslavs broadcast from London, on the following

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² French translation (1934), p. 26.

I [941 -- Analysis]

160 ELEMENTS OF A FOLK-CHRISTIANITY

SP describe a number of local or tribal cults; nor is it justifiable
 771 to imagine a basis of a uniform primitive Slav system.
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In the South, that is to say, in the Lower Danube basin and in Illyria, tradition ascribes the first conversions to Christianity to the time of Heraclius, and there seems not to have been the same fierce and prolonged opposition to the new cult, with which it had to contend in Russia and Northern Europe. In Russia and in Poland, a dual confession, and apparently a heathen priesthood, lasted into the later Middle Ages; in the eleventh to twelfth centuries attempts were made to re-establish the old faith on a national basis. True, the rising in Bulgaria against Boris (eleventh century) was led by an anti-Christian element, but we do not know of an active
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 799 priesthood in this connection, nor whether it was a revival of Slavonic or Asperuh tendencies. Until the final establishment of a national, autonomous Church in Bulgaria, and in fact, until the turning-point of the Synod of Trnovo (seventeenth century), the indecision as to belief was evident not only in the varying allegiance to pope or patriarch, but in the activities of the numberless heretical sects, not merely tolerated, but at times enjoying considerable privileges and influence.

SP The presence of these sects, notably of a gnostic character,
 795 pre-dates the Orthodox missions of the tenth century, and caused their retreat from Pannonia. The earliest account of
 797 the Slav apostles mentions the 'thrice heathen heretics' who were unacquainted with Slavonic; probably referring to that mixture of Paulician and Eulite doctrine, which, since the fourth century, had spread into the Northern Balkans, and remains to this day among the Nazarenes of the trans-Danube. Syrian and Armenian colonies had been established in Thrace during the seventh century in the time of Constantine, still known to M. Psellos and Cedrenos as Massalians. Armenian Monophysites and Paulicians lived in the neighbourhood of Plovdiv, Sofia, Devol, Rila, Moglena, Kjustendil, etc., from the eleventh to the thirteenth century; the Dragovilci being known in South-east Macedonia as extreme